

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A method for communicating update metadata corresponding to a software update to a client computer, the method comprising:

receiving a synchronization request from a client computer for information regarding a software update corresponding to a software product; and

responsive to the synchronization request:

determining whether a software update is available for the software product;

~~providing a computer-readable medium storing computer-readable data organized in~~ generating a tag-based data structure to a client computer, wherein the tag-based data structure includes tag-based elements storing metadata corresponding to a software update available for installation on the client computer, the tag-based data structure comprising:

a tag-based identifier element storing metadata that uniquely identifies the software update; and

at least one additional element of the following tag-based elements:

a property element storing metadata identifying general properties relating to the software update including update handler information identifying an update handler for installing the identified software update on the client computer;

a localized property element ~~[[for]]~~ storing metadata identifying language specific information directed to a computer user relating to the software update;

a relationship element storing metadata identifying relationships the software update has to other software updates;

a rule element storing metadata identifying rules for determining the applicability of the software update to a client computer;

a file element storing metadata identifying the identified software update's payload and information relating to the software update's payload; and

a handler element storing metadata identifying information for executing the update handler identified in the property elements for installing the identified software update on the client computer; and

providing the tag-based data structure to the client computer.

2. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the tag-based data structure is an XML data structure.

3. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein the tag-based elements in the tag-based data structure are arranged in the tag-based data structure ~~according to the above-described order~~ such that the identifier element is located in the tag-based data structure before property elements, property elements are located in the tag-based data structure before localized property elements, localized property elements are located in the tag-based data structure before relationship elements, relationship elements are located in the tag-based data structure before rule elements, rule elements are located in the tag-based data structure before file elements, and file elements are located in the tag-based data structure before handler elements.

4. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 3, wherein the identifier element includes a unique identifier that uniquely identifies the software update, and a revision number associated with the software update.

5. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 3, wherein the relationship element includes prerequisite information that identifies another software update that must be installed before the identified software update is installed.

6. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 5, wherein the relationship element further includes information identifying a plurality of software updates joined together with Boolean operators into a logical statement, such that the evaluation of the logical statement determines the suitability of the identified software update for installation on the client computer.

7. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 3, wherein the relationship element includes bundle information that identifies a plurality of software updates that must be installed coextensively.

8. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 7, wherein the plurality of software updates are joined together with Boolean operators into a logical statement, such that the evaluation of the logical statement determines the suitability of the bundled software updates for installation on the client computer.

9. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 3, wherein the relationship element includes supersedence information that identifies at least one other software update that is superseded by the identified software update.

10. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 3, wherein the relationship element includes prerequisite information that identifies other software updates that must be installed before the identified software update is installed, bundle information that identifies a plurality of software updates that must be installed coextensively, and supersedence information that identifies at least one other software update that is superseded by the identified software update.

11. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the file element includes information identifying the software update's payload for patching existing files on the client computer.

12. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the file element includes information identifying the software update's payload for replacing existing files on the client computer.

13. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 12, wherein the file element further includes information identifying the software update's payload for patching existing files on a client computer and replacing existing files on the client computer.

14. (Currently amended) A method for communicating update metadata corresponding to a software update to a client computer, comprising:

receiving a synchronization request from a client computer for information regarding a software update corresponding to a software product; and

responsive to the synchronization request:

determining whether a software update is available for the software product;

providing generating a tag-based data structure to a client computer, wherein the tag-based data structure includes tag-based elements storing metadata corresponding to a software update available for installation on the client computer, wherein the tag-based elements are text-based elements, the tag-based data structure comprising:

an identifier element that uniquely identifies the software update; and

at least one additional element of the following elements:

a property element storing general properties relating to the software update including update handler information identifying an update handler for installing the identified software update on the client computer;

a relationship element storing relationships the software update has to other software updates;

a file element identifying the identified software update's payload and information describing ~~information relating~~ to the software update's payload; and

a handler element storing information for executing the update handler identified in the property elements for installing the identified software update on the client computer; and

providing the tag-based data structure to the client computer.

15. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 14, wherein the tag-based data structure is an XML data structure.

16. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 14, wherein the identifier element includes a unique identifier that uniquely identifies the software update, and a revision number associated with the software update.

17. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 16, wherein the relationship element includes prerequisite information that identifies another software update that must be installed before the identified software update is installed.

18. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 17, wherein the relationship element further includes information identifying a plurality of software updates joined together with

Boolean operators into a logical statement, such that the evaluation of the logical statement determines the suitability of the identified software update for installation on the client computer.

19. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 16, wherein the relationship element includes bundle information that identifies a plurality of software updates that must be installed coextensively.

20. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 19, wherein the plurality of software updates are joined together with Boolean operators into a logical statement, such that the evaluation of the logical statement determines the suitability of the bundled software updates for installation on the client computer.

21. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 16, wherein the relationship element includes supersedence information that identifies at least one other software update that is superseded by the identified software update.

22. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 16, wherein the relationship element includes prerequisite information that identifies other software updates that must be installed before the identified software update is installed, bundle information that identifies a plurality of software updates that must be installed coextensively, and supersedence information that identifies at least one other software update that is superseded by the identified software update.

23. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 16, wherein the file element includes information identifying the software update's payload for patching existing files on the client computer.

24. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 16, wherein the file element includes information identifying the software update's payload for replacing existing files on the client computer.

25. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 24, wherein the file element further includes information identifying the software update's payload for patching existing files on the client computer and replacing existing files on the client computer.